



Greenville's Big Idea Comes Of Age

GREENVILLE'S BIG IDEA COMES OF AGE

A Comparative Study
of the
Condition of Blacks
in
Greenville, South Carolina
1949-1986

Prepared by the
Faculty and Students
of
Furman University

for

The Greenville Urban League
Greenville, South Carolina

Funded by
The Greenville Community Foundation

The Board of Directors of the Greenville Urban League conceived the idea of undertaking a comparative study of conditions in the Black community between 1949-1950 and 1985-1986 when a brochure entitled Greenville's Big Idea was rediscovered in Furman University's archives. Political Science Professor John Green of Furman agreed to undertake the research necessary for the study with the help of Furman students, and the Community Foundation agreed to fund the project. A bi-racial advisory committee was later formed to consider the research and to make recommendations. It was with a real sense of accomplishment that the Board of Directors received and approved a study which resulted from hours of labor by many dedicated volunteers. We believe that the full text provides a research document of inestimable value and that the summary will offer a program for a better community.

Mack A. Whittle
Chairman of the Board

MAW/sdb

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As co-chairmen of the Steering Committee for Greenville's Big Idea Comes of Age, we wish to acknowledge the assistance of all the groups and individuals which have made this study possible and who have worked to develop recommendations for change.

First, our thanks must go to Max Heller and the Board of the Greenville Community Foundation which provided the funds for research and publication.

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We also acknowledge the dedicated work and hours of volunteer energy that steering committee members Elizabeth Gower, Alberta Grimes, J.D. Mathis, Myron Robinson, Lisa Van Riper, Sylvia Fowler (staff) and especially Dr. Judith Bainbridge of Furman University, who wrote the survey summary, gave to this project. Their advice and guidance, their careful attention to the text of both the full study and the summary have allowed us to produce a document which will be a continuing resource for the entire community.

Advisory Committee chairmen and co-chairmen brought sub-committees together to study each section, to make comments on the research presented, and to form recommendations for the future. Their work in coordination and leadership was essential for the success of this project and we acknowledge it with genuine appreciation. Their committee members provided the insight and ideas which are reflected in their recommendations.

We appreciate too the help of IBM and the Liberty Corporation for assistance with publication design, and the Community Planning Council for its support.

To the Greenville Urban League, its Board of Directors, and its President, Myron Robinson, we wish to express our thanks for their foresight in authorizing this study, their day-to-day support, and their enthusiasm. We appreciate their trust in our judgment and their concern for progress in Greenville.

G. Lee Cory
Thomas H. Hooper, III
Co-chairmen

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INTRODUCTION

In 1949, a bi-racial committee studied the problems of Blacks in Greenville, South Carolina. The result was Greenville's Big Idea, a report on the conditions of the Black population, including industry and employment, community welfare, health care, housing, education, law enforcement, safety and sanitation, transportation, recreation, religious resources and community participation. Advisory sub-committees made recommendations for improvement in each area.

For its time and place Greenville's Big Idea was both candid and courageous, for it was conducted by the community itself, with help from the Community Council and the faculty and students of Furman University. The effort had a significant impact: within three years of its completion in 1950, sixty-one of its specific recommendations had been acted on. Greenville's Big Idea became a model for community "self-study" throughout the South.

One result of Greenville's Big Idea was the eventual arrival in Greenville of the Urban League. Some thirty-five years after the original study, in 1986, the Urban League proposed updating Greenville's Big Idea to document changes in the conditions of the Black population since 1949. With financial support from the Greenville Community Foundation and assistance from the Community Planning Council, faculty and students of the Furman University political science department researched and compiled a major report, which has been entitled Greenville's Big Idea Comes of Age. While a rearrangement of the original study's contents was required, every effort was made to cover the same topics. Like the original study, the research was presented to bi-racial citizen advisory committees, who offered invaluable criticism and comments on the research and developed recommendations for improvement.

The conclusions of this report can be stated succinctly: there have been dramatic improvements in the conditions of the Black population since 1949, but equality with Whites has not yet been achieved. The greatest progress has occurred in education, health care, and community participation, followed by public services, housing, and employment, with the least improvement occurring with social problems. While impressive gains have been made in every aspect of Black community life, continued progress must be made to ensure real equity between the races in Greenville.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Four different sources of information were used in this study. The 1950 and 1980 Censuses of Population, Housing and Business provide the backbone of the study. Census data was supplemented with information from local sources: interviews with local officials and other knowledgeable persons, local news accounts, reports and public records. Unfortunately, high quality data was not available on many topics, particularly for 1949-1950. Census data and present day public records are not always comparable, so data had to be estimated from existing

statistics, pieced together from secondary sources, produced from random samples of public documents or off-the-record interviews. Despite these limitations (which are noted in the full text), the general trends of the last thirty-five years clearly emerge.

The report is given depth by two sources of public opinion. Furman students interviewed 42 local Black leaders (30 men and 12 women) to elicit their views on community problems. The attitudes of the citizenry were gauged from several opinion surveys conducted by the Furman University political science department. The most comprehensive surveys were undertaken for the Community Planning Council's Needs Assessment study in 1981. One was a telephone survey of 600 citizens in Greenville county; the other was a comparable mail survey of 150 Black and White community leaders. In the spring of 1985, a telephone survey of 1,173 people was conducted for the city of Greenville on attitudes towards city services. A special telephone survey of the Black community was conducted for this study, with 412 respondents. In addition, a number of smaller surveys and student projects provide fragmentary evidence on points not covered by the other studies.

Although the surveys were administered several years apart, there was a great overlap between the questions asked, and the answers in each case were very similar. However, great caution must be used in interpreting the results of these surveys. All survey techniques are subject to error, and the bias of telephone surveys is well-known: they under-represent the poorer and less educated portion of the population. Thus, these surveys may understate community attitudes on issues that most concern less-advantaged citizens (such as unemployment and poverty). In order to counteract such a bias, the responses to all the surveys were weighted to match the demographic characteristics of Greenville county. Thus, the proportion of Black, poor and less education responses in the final statistics reflects the proportion of these groups in the community at large.

No comparable opinion data exists for Black and White citizens or leaders for 1949. However, an unpublished masters thesis by Joseph Drake, "The Negro in Greenville, South Carolina" (University of North Carolina, 1940) contains extensive interviews with local Black and White citizens and leaders on many of the topics covered in Greenville's Big Idea. Some of Drake's informants later participated in the 1949 study. In addition, Black and White leaders active in community affairs in the 1940s found the opinions Drake reports to be accurate reflections of public opinion as they remember it. Thus, Drake's observations will be employed as a surrogate for community attitudes at the time of the original study.

The full text of Greenville's Big Idea Comes of Age is available for those who are interested in the complete statistical analysis and opinion data. This summary states the findings, highlights the concerns of bi-racial advisory committees, and sets forth recommendations for change. In most cases, the sub-committees emphasized three or four major concerns and directed their recommendations toward improving specific conditions.

In order to implement these recommendations, the Urban League Board of Directors will appoint task forces composed of Advisory Committee members and interested citizens. These groups will develop appropriate plans for bringing about the recommended changes and will coordinate their efforts with public and private agencies. While much of the primary responsibility for changing conditions may rest with government, social agencies, and businesses, ultimately it can only be the actions and values of citizens, of parents and young people, of adults and children, which will make a better community. With this new study, Greenville's Big Idea has indeed "Come of Age," but continued commitment by both Black and White Greenvillians will be needed to develop a truly equitable society.

SECTION 1 INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

A. Report Summary

The income of Blacks in Greenville has doubled in real terms since 1949-50. Yet despite this increase, Black households earn, on the average, less than two-thirds as much as Whites. Most of the income gains come from a sharp rise in working and middle class households, but almost half of Black households have incomes below \$10,000 and almost half of White households are above \$20,000.

One cause for the disparity in income between the races is the higher rate of Black unemployment, which has usually been twice that of White households. Generally, Black women suffer from higher rates of unemployment than Black men, and joblessness among Black teenagers is often four times higher than that of Black adults. In addition, many Black workers are discouraged from applying for jobs and are not counted in employment figures.

The jobs held by Blacks have changed greatly over the 35 years of the study: in 1950 a third of Black men were skilled laborers or white collar workers; today two-thirds are. Manufacturing jobs have increased by a third for Black men, and by three times for Black women. Black employment in professions and public administration has expanded four times since 1950, although Blacks have made few gains in banking, insurance, and real estate. However, few Blacks are managers in manufacturing concerns or are doctors, although many work in factories and medical offices. Pay differentials are difficult to document although anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that Blacks earn substantially less than Whites in comparable jobs.

Survey opinion data suggests that attitudes about income and employment have changed focus: Blacks in the 1940s complained of overt mistreatment associated with legal segregation. By 1986, three-fourths of the Black citizens surveyed saw unemployment as a serious problem and 40% indicated that job discrimination is a problem. Many Black leaders believe that a substantial number of unemployed Blacks cannot obtain or master good jobs because of poor training, lack of self-discipline, and low self-esteem. Much of the blame for this situation is placed on past and present discrimination. Yet while discrimination in hiring is regarded as serious, many do not see it as a major stumbling block to employment for lower- and working-class Blacks. They do, however, see it as a real problem for middle-class employees. Job discrimination is viewed as subtle and expressed as often in lack of promotions and salary raises as in hiring.

Many Black leaders see the growth in Black-owned businesses as crucial to further gains in Black employment. According to a 1983 study, Black businesses suffer from many of the same problems as small businesses generally: a lack of expertise, poor organization and unwillingness to seek help. Local officials believe that the failure rate is perhaps 25% higher for Black businesses than for White. Several Black leaders interviewed mentioned that White businessmen were often unwilling to deal with Black businesses, but the most serious problem

facing Black-owned businesses are under-capitalization, lack of access to financial institutions, and high interest rates. Just as many of the leaders interviewed see Black businesses as crucial to Black employment, they also see better financial opportunities as crucial to the development of these businesses.

Black leaders strongly endorsed job training and placement programs and vocational rehabilitation programs, which have shown steady improvement since 1949. However, they also believe that there should be more coordination among public and private programs, more integration of these programs into community economic development efforts, and higher levels of funding for job-related programs.

B. Advisory Committee Recommendations

The Advisory Committee on Income and Employment emphasized three major problems identified by the study: the facts that Black unemployment is high, that Blacks tend to hold lower level jobs, and that Black-owned businesses have a high failure rate and have financing problems. Their recommendations are centered in these areas.

I. Unemployment

A. Recruit volunteers to match themselves with unemployed Blacks and assist them in finding a job. Perhaps these contacts between the volunteer and the placed worker could continue, and these contacts could be enlightening to all.

B. Expand on-the-job training programs. Ask for corporations to open a slot in a training program (checkout clerk training, teller training, etc.) to allow an unemployed worker to gain a skill.

C. Schedule a series of instructional programs with small numbers of unemployed workers and business volunteers to discuss problems of the job hunt, techniques, etc., with the result that small group black-white person-to-person contacts are initiated.

D. Expand employment guidance training which identify work habits and attitudes necessary to get and keep a job. Recruit unemployed minorities for these programs, arrange for necessary transportation and child care programs to enable them to attend.

II. Level of Employment

A. Organize a series of meetings between corporate leadership in Greenville and minority middle management personnel to address job-related issues and make both sides more sensitive to the problem.

B. Organize a Black "middle management" council to foster contacts and networking.

C. Identify successful Blacks in middle management and involve them in leadership training for other Blacks.

D. Attempt to build support among local leaders to seek qualified minority candidates for employment.

III. Black-owned Businesses

A. Recruit volunteers to match themselves with Black-owned businesses to assist them in promoting their businesses.

B. Recruit volunteers (or teams) to adopt a Black-owned business and work with them in more detail than in selling only (accounting, marketing, personnel, etc.)

C. Sponsor a minority trade fair.

D. Offer Chamber of Commerce scholarships to Black-owned businesses; use specific marketing for Black community.

E. Sponsor a Black business "network" group.

F. Develop a minority buying guide; encourage minority purchasing.

G. Attempt to arrange scholarships to small business seminars for Black-owned businesses.

H. Develop enterprise zones in Black neighborhoods.

I. Encourage local banks to start a loan pool with favorable rates for minority loans.

Sub-committee on Income and Employment: Merl Code - Chairman
Jayne Cleveland
Robert Howard
Ennis Fant
Judith Bainbridge
Dorothy Mims
Bette Drayton

SECTION 2 POVERTY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

A. Report Summary

Greenville's Big Idea investigated the incidence of poverty and social problems in the Black community, finding at every turn serious conditions and inadequate efforts to remedy them. Though the situation has improved over the last thirty-five years, Blacks still suffer from poverty and many social problems at higher rates than Whites.

While proportionately far more Blacks than Whites live in poverty in Greenville, there has been a dramatic decrease in their numbers because of increased aid and income. In 1950, according to the Census Bureau, 73% of Blacks and 35% of Whites lived in poverty; in 1980, the respective figures were 26% and 6%.

The characteristics of the poor have also changed, with more women and children suffering. In 1980, two-thirds of poverty-stricken Black households were headed by women, and almost half of all Black children lived in poverty. While unemployment and lack of education may be primarily responsible for the continued persistence of poverty among Blacks, social problems are another cause. Poor people in general are often trapped in a "cycle of despair," born into disadvantaged families, raised with social and economic disabilities, spend their adulthood in poverty, and produce children who repeat the cycle. Because of the lack of opportunity in the past and continued discrimination, Blacks are more likely to end up in this "culture of poverty" than are Whites.

The incidence of social problems is difficult to assess: data from the past is uncertain and reporting has changed; family problems especially are often not reported. Four broad areas of social problems have been identified: family problems, mental health problems, substance abuse and crime. Family problems have increased for both Blacks and Whites over the years of the study, while other problems appear to have declined.

In Greenville, as in the nation as a whole, out-of-wedlock and teenage births have sharply increased. The rate of Black illegitimate births, for example, has nearly doubled since 1950 and has increased by a third for Whites. Spouse and child abuse, family violence, and neglect have also climbed disturbingly. Finally, the divorce rate has roughly doubled since the 1950s among both Blacks and Whites.

Mental health problems seem to show some slight improvement. There has been an increase in the number of Blacks admitted to state mental hospitals, and Blacks are twenty times more likely to make use of Mental Health Center facilities than are Whites. (Whites are more apt to use private counseling services.) The number of "street people" suffering from mental illness has, however, apparently fallen by a third for Blacks, and the suicide rate has declined by 42%. Still Blacks are twice as likely to be "street people" and four times as likely to take their own lives as Whites.

Substance abuse showed mixed trends. Alcohol abuse has declined marginally for both Blacks and Whites while drug abuse has increased greatly. Crime shows a similar pattern: juvenile delinquency has increased modestly since 1950 and violent crimes have declined.

Many of these problems stem from the concentration of poor Blacks in older, deteriorating neighborhoods. Indeed, more than a third of the residents of the ten neighborhoods identified as "blighted" in 1949 live in poverty in 1986.

Many of the social problems identified as serious in the 1940s remain so today, although attitudes about them have changed. In the 1940s Black social problems were used by Whites to justify discrimination. While the same problems are regarded as serious today, attitudes about them are more sophisticated. Many Black leaders, for example, are especially concerned about the crisis of Black men as central to the wellness of the Black family. In their view, these young Black men feel inadequate as workers, providers, and fathers and frustrated because they perceive a lack of opportunity. Often raised with few good male role models, young Black men face a hostile world which tends to confirm their sense of helplessness. As a result, some turn to drugs and crime and are reluctant to take on family responsibilities. Many leaders see this lack of responsibility as the cause for the high rate of teenage and out-of-wedlock births. All stress the need for self-improvement: education, hard work, stability and pride as well as increased economic opportunity.

Programs organized by both private and public agencies to deal with poverty and social problems are more approved of by the Black than the White community, although all share a belief that crime prevention, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy programs need to be strengthened. Social programs have expanded at least five times in real terms since 1949, especially those in the area of public assistance, and most especially in in-kind assistance such as food stamps. Currently about half of all poverty-level households receive some public assistance.

Counseling assistance has also increased dramatically, with about a third of the clients being Black. Many of the Black leaders interviewed were concerned about reductions in spending for public assistance and critical of rulings which encourage the break-up of the Black family. One serious complaint from the past has been remedied, however. In 1949, there were few Black social workers or job counselors in Greenville. By 1980, roughly 40% of those professionals were Black.

B. Committee Recommendations

The Advisory Committee on poverty and social problems identified eight major areas of concern: blighted neighborhoods, under-education, unemployment, mental health problems, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, spouse and child abuse and neglect, and crime prevention. Although some of their recommendations overlap with those of other sub-committees, all are included.

I. Blighted Neighborhoods.

A. Establish an intensive and extensive education effort by City and County housing officials to make existing housing assistance programs known.

B. Encourage more joint private sector/human service agency funding of low cost housing such as the Greenville Urban League's Gandy-Allmon Manor, the Southernside Brockwood project, and Renaissance II.

C. Form neighborhood watch groups to monitor the upkeep of redevelopment projects.

D. Make available additional funding for self-sufficiency programs.

II. Under-education

Continue to explore alternative educational designs like magnet schools, year round utilization of schools, incentive attendance programs, and vocational schools for middle school students.

III. Unemployment

A. Establish a program such as Workfare or the "ET" program (Employment and Training) recently set up in Massachusetts whereby Blacks are given training for jobs at the job site.

B. Develop a mechanism for upper educated and income Blacks to help lower educated and income Blacks move into the mainstream of economic life.

C. Establish a task force composed of representatives of all Greenville City and county social agencies (Share, Greenville Urban League, Phillis Wheatly, DSS, etc.) business and community leaders, government officials, educators and other human service providers to address the issues and develop strategies to improve economic conditions in the Black community. One product of this task force would be to convene a Black Economic Summit.

IV. Mental Health Problems

A. Work with the Greenville County Mental Health Association to further develop coping strategies for stress-related problems.

B. Contact regional area Black mental health officials to conduct seminars and use other appropriate ways to educate Blacks as to viable ways of coping with stress and stress-related problems.

V. Alcohol/Substance Abuse

Promote programs such as the SCIP Program (School Intervention Program), a free counseling service available to middle and high school students who exhibit disruptive behavior, truancy, or suspected usage of alcohol or other drugs.

VI. Teenage Pregnancy

A. Coordinate efforts with the Greenville Council on Teenage Pregnancy on ways to reduce the high incidence of Black teenage pregnancy.

B. Continue efforts to increase community leaders' awareness of the problems associated with teen pregnancy, its prevalence, consequences, and implications.

C. Encourage the utilization of a sex education curriculum in all schools.

VII. Spouse and Child Abuse and Neglect

A. Coordinate efforts with the Department of Social Services on strategies which will decrease the incidence of spouse/child abuse and neglect.

B. Develop a task force specifically to address the problem of child abuse and neglect and aid them with financial, technical and moral support in the implementation of selected strategies.

VIII. Crime

Work with organizations such as the Citizens Crime Committee, Crime Stoppers and the victim/Witness Assistance Program, and the Housewise/Streetwise Program to protect potential victims and prevent some crimes.

LaBarbara Sampson, chairman
Sally Martin, co-chair
Lenny Springs
James Madison
Harriett Williams

Austin Park
William Boone

SECTION 3
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

A. Report Summary

Greenville's Big Idea ranked health care as one of the most serious problems facing Blacks in 1949. The end of segregation and advances in medicine since then have greatly increased the quantity and quality of medical services available to Blacks, approaching the level of health care received by Whites. However, many health problems are still more common among the Black population, consistent with incidence of poverty and social problems.

It is clear that the mortality rate has declined significantly for the Black population since 1950 and has actually risen for the White population. One reason for the progress has been the eradication of tuberculosis in the Black community. Infant mortality has improved significantly (from 53.7 per 1,000 births to 21.7) but is still much higher than for the White population (14.2). Physical handicaps are also more common among Blacks than among Whites and have increased in proportion to the population since 1950. The larger proportion of births among underage and poor Black women helps account for these differences.

With the exception of pregnancy-related problems, the aging of Greenville's population is primarily responsible for the change in mortality rates. The proportion of the population 65 years or older has doubled for both Blacks and Whites since 1950. This greater longevity has added to higher costs and problems with access to medical services among the elderly poor.

Another reason for improvement in the mortality rate is greater access to medical care, which has expanded enormously for all Greenvillians, but especially for Blacks. In 1949 there were 2 hospital beds per 1,000 Black people compared to 3 per 1,000 for Whites; by 1985 there were 3.4 available to everyone. The quality of hospitalization has also improved dramatically. In 1949, for example, the Black women's ward at Greenville General Hospital did not have a private toilet. Blacks now use hospital resources at a rate nearly equal to Whites, although Blacks use out-patient services, clinics, and Health Department services at a higher rate. Blacks participate at a higher rate than Whites in Medicare and Medicaid and receive more assistance proportionately from the hospitals' budgets for indigent and charity cases. One reason for this situation is that fewer Blacks than Whites have medical insurance, according to local authorities.

One aspect of medicine in Greenville that has changed little since 1949 is the number of Black doctors. In 1949, there were four Black doctors in Greenville; in 1986, there are two. According to state officials, there are far fewer Black interns and residents, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and managerial personnel than there are White.

Attitudes about health care have changed greatly. In the 1940s health care was segregated, but illness among Blacks was seen as affecting the entire community. While the problems today are seen as much less severe, 65% of Black leaders believe that more health care programs are needed. Both Blacks and Whites are pleased with the hospital system and "very satisfied" with local doctors. But nearly all Black leaders mentioned the lack of Black doctors and are concerned that few Blacks enter medical professions. Of particular concern to Blacks are programs for pregnant women and newborn care and the need for long-term institutional care and retirement preparation.

B. Committee Recommendations

The Advisory Committee on Health and Health Care identified three areas of primary concern: mortality rates, the number of Black physicians and health professionals, and accessibility of health care to older citizens.

I. Mortality Rates

Mobilize the necessary community resources, providers, and agencies to establish an action plan to reduce black infant mortality rates. These steps should be focused on an improved access and availability of prenatal care, emphasis on the improvement of the nutritional status of mothers, reduction in teenage pregnancies, and the promotion of overall health maintenance in the Black community.

II. Number of Black Physicians and Black Health Professionals

A) Organize a community task force representing all segments of the community, including the Chamber of Commerce, all health care providers, the Greenville County Medical Society, and representatives from the South Carolina medical schools to establish an affirmative action plan for the recruitment and retention of black physicians in Greenville County.

B) Identify and promote scholarships for minorities so that more enter the medical profession.

C) Recruit and retain more Black health professionals in both management and clinical areas.

D) Promote health careers in the Black community.

E) Emphasize health careers through guidance counselors at schools and youth organizations.

III. Accessibility of Health Care

A) Increase accessibility to health care services for the Black community, including development of neighborhood clinics, free clinics, and mobile vans to make services more readily available.

B) Use health fairs to help distribute health materials, screen for primary health problems and make individuals aware of what services and facilities are available.

C) Continue to coordinate and improve the health care services to all older adults in cooperation with Senior Action as the lead agency in this area.

Subcommittee on Health and Health Care: Jeff Lefko - Chairman
Anna Smith - Co-chair
Melvin Davis
Robert Jenkins
Ronald Rollett

SECTION 4
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. Report Summary

Although the gap between Blacks and Whites is still wide, desegregation and the increase in Black income have resulted in great improvement in Black housing over the last thirty-five years. Blacks are almost twice as likely to live in poor housing as Whites. Most of Greenville's Black population lives in Black neighborhoods, which are small and widely scattered throughout the county. Between 1950 and 1980 there was a slow but gradual dispersion of Blacks throughout the county which has allowed greater access to quality housing.

The number of Black homeowners more than doubled between 1950 and 1980, and the value of Black houses tripled in real terms. While significantly more Whites own homes worth \$50,000 or more, the margin decreased from 9 to 1 in 1950 to 4 to 1 in 1980. The financial burden of home-owning is always greater for lower income people, and in 1980, 30% of Black homeowners spent more than the federally-recommended level of monthly income on mortgage payments. These figures suggest a shortage of moderately-priced housing in Greenville.

The quality of Black housing has also improved during this period. Local census data indicate that the number of substandard houses has declined by a third since 1950 and that over-crowding is much lower for both Blacks and Whites. While basic equipment of Black houses has improved substantially (half of all Black houses did not have complete bathrooms or kitchens in 1950), many Black homeowners still do not enjoy the same amenities as Whites: 23% lack telephones; 64% have no air conditioner.

Blacks are still twice as likely as Whites to live in rental housing, the cost of which has tripled in real terms since 1950. Again, figures support a shortage of moderately-priced rental housing in Greenville. While there has been dramatic improvement since 1950 in rental housing, Black renters are in dire need of low-cost housing.

While housing shows major progress, there is still a concentration of poor quality living conditions in the ten neighborhoods identified as "blighted" in 1949 and still largely unkempt. In these areas, condition of streets, sidewalks and sewers remains a major problem. Like many of the people who reside in them, these neighborhoods have not participated in Greenville's economic growth.

Housing has continued to be a major concern in the Black community. A 1940 study showed that Blacks desired public housing projects and slum clearance; White respondents were adamantly opposed to public housing or community development projects. By 1986, Black citizens and leaders still saw housing as an important need, and Whites saw it as a much less serious problem. A housing study found that discriminatory practices on the part of real estate professionals and public officials are rare, although there was thought to be substantial "covert

discrimination" on the part of individual property owners. The study concludes that housing discrimination has been declining in Greenville for two decades. A number of the Black leaders interviewed believe that housing inspections are ineffective and that some public officials do not enforce laws on substandard property owned by prominent White citizens. In their view, home-ownership was the best long term solution.

The first public housing project was in the planning stage when Greenville's Big Idea was completed in 1950. Since then ten major projects and a number of scattered sites have been developed with a total of 1,323 units. Community development programs were also just beginning and in the intervening years \$31 million has been spent by local governments to redevelop blighted neighborhoods. Most of these programs have been directed at Black neighborhoods. Several Black leaders felt that projects were too small and progressed far too slowly; others argued that more could be done to integrate community development programs with social services. There is a perception in the Black community that many of their concerns have been left out of overall economic development activities.

B. Committee Recommendations and Comments

The Advisory Committee on Housing and Community Development identified six problems: substandard and overcrowded housing; a shortage of moderately-priced housing; inadequate public investment in streets, drainage, curbs, gutters, sidewalks and lighting in low income Black communities; lack of enforcement and uniformity between city and county housing codes; need for incorporation of neighborhood self-improvement projects into redevelopment projects; and the fact that public housing has become a "safety net" for the poorest of the poor. Their recommendations deal specifically with these issues.

I. Substandard and Overcrowded Housing

- A) Involve community churches and other organizations to establish funds and volunteers for community rehabilitation.
- B) Establish a revolving loan pool where homeowners can borrow at lower rates of interest.

II. Shortage of Moderately-priced Housing

- A) Create economic incentives to encourage the construction and rehabilitation of moderately priced housing by the private sector. Example: Revolving loan pools by city and county governments.
- B) Assist targeted population with equity subsidies.
- C) Encourage Habitat for Humanity to build additional low cost housing.
- D) Encourage partnership between governments and developers to build moderately priced apartments and single family homes.

III. Lack of Public Investment in Poorer Black Neighborhoods

- A) Provide funding for self-sufficiency programs which attack community problems as a whole.
- B) Encourage city investment where rehabilitation and construction are taking place.
- C) Make homeowners aware that they can share 50/50 cost of street improvements.

IV. Code Enforcement and Uniformity

- A) Bring uniformity to city and county housing codes and stricter enforcement of these codes.
- B) Investigate occupancy permits for rental property to bring houses and rental units into compliance.

V. Self-improvement Efforts in Redevelopment Projects

Encourage the formation of committees such as beautification, crime prevention, home improvement, employment, business, etc.

VI. Public Housing as a "Safety Net"

- A) Create innovative programs like the one in Washington, D.C. headed by Kimmie Gray to address tenant ownership of public housing.
- B) Promote a "trade mission" to Florence to exchange ideas with their Housing Authority.
- C) Require educational programs for tenants

Comment: The Urban League should appoint a task force to include residents of the identified Black neighborhoods, representatives of community churches, city and county officials, the Redevelopment Authority, Housing Authority, the Advisory Sub-committee on Housing, and members at large. This task force should formulate a comprehensive plan for county-wide awareness to alleviate substandard housing, promote home ownership, revitalize neighborhoods, upgrade rental property, improve public housing and create additional moderately priced housing, both ownership and rental. Potential venturers to implement this plan should be identified.

Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development:

Patricia Haskell Robinson, Chairperson
J. Wilbur Walker, Co-chair
Ruth Ann Butler
Juanita Cooper
Thomas C. Gower, III
J.D. Mathis
Eleanor Welling

A. Report Summary

Education has always been a top priority among Blacks in Greenville. Greenville's Big Idea documented the inadequate resources and poor performances of the segregated school system. In perhaps the most dramatic gains since 1949, Blacks have obtained access to quality public education. Yet despite equal treatment in the schools, Blacks do not yet match Whites in educational attainment.

School integration came smoothly and peacefully to Greenville in 1970, in part because of school consolidation in the 1950s. As a consequence of consolidation and integration, public spending has grown ten-fold in real terms for Black students since 1949 and four times for White students. Similarly, the value of school facilities nearly quadrupled, the student/teacher ratio fell, and the quality of faculty and curriculum improved. In the 1984/85 school year, the budget, facilities, and curriculum of schools in predominately Black neighborhoods and with large Black enrollments were compared to traditionally White schools, and no pattern of racial inequality was found. Gross equity in educational resources seems to have been achieved.

The Black community has borne much of the burden in the equalizing of educational opportunities. Busing is the principal method of integration, and in 1983, 88% of the students bused to achieve racial balance were Black. In the same year 40% of the county system's schools varied more than 10% from the acceptable racial rates. Progress has been made, however, in Black employment: Black teachers (16%), counselors (25%), and principals (15%) have been hired roughly in proportion to the Black population and 11% of administrators with district-wide responsibilities are Black.

School attendance has increased for children of every age, from pre-elementary through high school, so that nearly the same proportion of Black and White students now attend schools in Greenville, and 55% of all Black students continue their education past high school. Black participation in continuing education programs has increased greatly: 13% of the students at Greenville Tech and 48% of the adults enrolled in the school district's continuing education program are Black.

Test scores have risen dramatically for both Black and White students since 1949. Although Black achievement still trails Whites, often by large margins, the gap has narrowed much in the elementary grades and less among high school students. Given the pattern of test scores, it is not surprising that Black students participate more in special education programs (47%) and less in gifted programs (6% in 1983) than do Whites. Black students are involved in remedial programs in proportion to their numbers, however. Blacks are more apt to be suspended or to drop out of school than Whites. Black involvement in extra-curricular activities is proportionate, although involvement in PTAs is substantially less and may well have declined since 1949.

All of these gains contribute to a higher educational level among Blacks, a lessening number of both illiterates and functionally illiterate people, and a substantial increase in the number who hold high school diplomas. The proportion of college-age Blacks in post-secondary institutions has also climbed, particularly in enrollments in two-year programs. The number of Black students attending predominantly White institutions in South Carolina has, however, declined in the past three years.

Attitudes toward education have shifted since the 1940s, when Blacks deeply resented the poor quality of their schools and White condescension toward their educational potential. What has not changed is a deep concern for educational opportunity and equality. Several Black leaders felt that public education is still unequal for Blacks, and most were resentful that Blacks carry the burden of busing. Many felt that it was unfair that those who had suffered so much from segregation were the ones who were bused long distances. Others believed that distance from their homes lessened the involvement of Black students and parents in the schools. Some believed that the closing of schools in Black neighborhoods removed a central community focus. Many leaders were concerned about lack of motivation among Black students and lack of support for education among Black parents. Almost all were concerned about cutbacks in federal funds but encouraged by increase in state monies. Leaders were especially concerned about the lack of Black male teachers as role models and wanted more Black decision-makers in education.

New funding resulting from the Educational Improvement Act will go in part for education of the disadvantaged and for mandatory kindergartens, which should improve educational opportunities for Black students. In addition, many programs to combat illiteracy and to offer tutoring services have been added by community organizations.

B. Committee Recommendations

The Advisory Committee on Education was especially concerned about the following problems identified in the Urban League study: the high percentage of Black students involved in special education programs, suspensions and drop outs, and busing; the high rate of illiteracy among Blacks, the lack of parental involvement, the difference in achievement, and the recruitment of Black teachers.

I. Special Education Programs

Re-evaluate students in special education classes periodically to determine whether some students should be reassigned.

II. Suspension and Drop Outs

Study the frequent suspension of Black students in disproportionate numbers and derive methods to reduce the number of suspensions.

III. Busing

Implement creative ways of keeping healthy racial ratios in schools to reduce the burden of busing on Black students.

IV. Illiteracy

Enlarge and expand publicly-funded community education programs.

V. Involvement

Coordinate efforts by Black churches and public and private agencies such as DSS, SHARE, Phillis Wheatley, and the Urban League and the School District to encourage Black parents to become more active in SICs and PTAs.

VI. Achievement

A. Strengthen tutoring programs by hiring part-time coordinators to bring volunteer tutors and students together.

B. Concentrate remedial programs and tutoring efforts on the upper grade levels where the gap between Black and White students is widest.

VII. Recruitment

Determine new ways to recruit and employ more Black teachers, especially Black males.

Thomas Kerns, chairman
Anthony Messineo, co-chair
Sam Zimmerman
S.T. Peden
Margaret Thomason

SECTION 6 PUBLIC SERVICES

A. Report Summary

Public services to Greenville's Black communities were inadequate in 1949. The end of segregation did much to alleviate these problems and by 1980 recreation, safety and sanitation, transportation and law enforcement services had achieved gross equity, although some traces of bias remain.

Generally, attitudes towards local government have changed. In 1949, Blacks had a very low opinion of both city and county government. By 1980, almost a third of Blacks said that city and county government was excellent. Only 2% of Black businesses claim discrimination from the city in any respect. Surely one reason for Blacks' approval comes from gains in Black employment in local government. In 1949, 6% of city and county employees were Black and nearly all were in menial jobs. Currently 33% of city employees and 14% of county employees are Black. While most Black employees are service workers or skilled laborers, and few hold top administrative jobs, Black professionals and technical workers are generally proportionate to the Black population. Some public agencies still employ few Blacks, such as the County Magistrates' office, but many more, such as the Transit Authority, employ a great many.

Spending for parks and recreation has increased ten-fold between 1950 and 1980. There are currently twelve community centers in or near Black areas and 35 parks and 12 other facilities open to all throughout the county. Although most Black neighborhoods have parks and playgrounds nearby, some of the poorer neighborhoods lack easy access to recreational areas. While more than a third of both Blacks and Whites are "very satisfied" with city and county recreation programs, Blacks would like to see more youth programs. Limited access to commercial recreation -- movies, for example, was the rule in 1949; today public accommodations are open to all.

Problems with sewers, drainage, garbage collection, drinkable water, unpaved streets and lack of sidewalks were facts of life in the Black community in 1949. The remnants of this lack of public investment can still be seen today, though services are far more extensive and equitable. Spending for sewers, drainage and water has increased four-fold in thirty-seven years, but some problems still persist, although generally a third of city residents are "very satisfied" with the current situation. Garbage and trash collection has also improved, for in real terms spending has increased 500% on solid waste collection. Garbage collection routes and frequency of service appear to be equal.

Greenville's Big Idea indicated that half the streets in Black neighborhoods were unpaved and the rest in disrepair; there were few sidewalks; traffic control and lighting were inadequate. By 1980 there had been significant improvements in all of those areas, but these services are often inferior in poor Black neighborhoods. It is difficult, however, to distinguish poor service from the general state of decay, and in redeveloped areas

there are fewer problems. Fire protection was judged to be adequate in 1949 and is now superior in all areas; nearly two-thirds of both Blacks and Whites are "very satisfied" with the fire department.

While Blacks complained about segregated public transportation in the early study, there was in 1949 a far more extensive bus service than exists today. Service is available to major portions of the Black community during workdays, but some older and poorer Blacks, who do not have access to cars (27% of the Black population compared to 7% of Whites), do have problems. Since 60% of the ridership of Greenville Transit Authority's buses is Black, it is not surprising that a third were "very satisfied" with service compared to only a fifth of Whites.

Law enforcement was considered the second most serious problem in the Black community in 1949; police and the court system were seen as agents of oppression and indifferent to Black on Black crime. In 1949, 38% of the people arrested in Greenville were Black; 45% of those arrests were young Black men booked for "investigation" with no other charge preferred. Today, law enforcement is much improved. In 1985, 16% of those arrested were Black. Only 3% of the County Human Relations Commission's files refer to discriminatory behavior by the police. Gross equity in patrols and response time has been achieved, but the greater rate of victimization in the Black community might well suggest a greater allocation of police service to Black communities.

The court system is also fairer. In a comparison of 87 paired cases in which Black and White defendants committed the same crime, only one case did not show comparable sentences. One reason for the decline in racial bias is better access to legal counsel by Blacks. In 1949, there were no Black lawyers in Greenville, and apparently few White lawyers would take Black clients. Now there are nine Black attorneys; White lawyers regularly represent Black clients; and lawyers are provided at public expense for indigents. Black citizens now approve more highly of the courts than do Whites.

Employment in the criminal justice system has also improved. In 1986, 16% of city officers are Black as are 10% of sheriff's department; the solicitor's office has 18% Black employees and the court system has 13%. Both Blacks and Whites agree on the need for more law enforcement, and Black leaders emphasize the need for more police protection in Black neighborhoods.

B. Committee Recommendations and Comments

The Advisory Committee on Public Services was particularly concerned about public service employment of minorities, park utilization, and public transportation.

I. Employment in the Public Sector

A. Continue recruiting and hiring Black professionals, administrators and technicians in local government.

B. Investigate the number and status of Blacks employed by the Federal Government in Greenville.

II. Parks

- A. Establish parks and playgrounds for all Black neighborhoods.
- B. Continue to use and expand parks as sites for educational enrichment programs for students during summer months.

III. Transportation

- A. Publicize transportation services available to the elderly.
- B. Encourage the Greenville Transit Authority (GTA) to examine its new route decision-making process to insure that Black communities are well served.
- C. Increase GTA's frequency of service and routes in the Black community.
- D. Increase GTA funding of services for the poor and elderly.

Comment: Greater cooperation between city and county government is necessary to solve problems relating to the entire community. A beautification and clean-up campaign for Black neighborhoods might be a useful starting point for such cooperation.

Advisory Committee on Public Service:

Rev. S.C. Cureton, chairman
Rev. Wayne Horne, co-chair
Fred Garrett
Theo Mitchell
Ron Preston
Vernoy Kennedy
Ann Pinson
Martha Gamble Hall

SECTION 7 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

A. Report Summary

Greenville's Big Idea pointed out that Blacks participated little in the political, civic and social life of the county, and that Black apathy was common. The conditions the report described have changed dramatically, although there is still less participation among Blacks than Whites.

In 1949, Black adults were nominally allowed to vote, but literacy tests and intimidation kept them from the polls; probably no more than 10% of the eligible Blacks registered and voted. In 1985, 50% of Greenville County Blacks are registered, compared to 61% of Whites. In 1984, only a third of Black voters cast ballots in the presidential election, and turnout in local elections is even lower. However, there have been gains in political participation due in part to single member districts; almost half of the Black candidates who have run for political office have been elected. In 1949 there was no Black public official.

Black leaders interviewed were nearly unanimous in the belief that the Black community needed to be more active in politics and that more Blacks need to be elected to public office. Although nearly all believed Black voting strength to be crucial, they disagreed about how to achieve this goal. Some believed that more resources were needed to register Blacks and encourage them to vote; others felt that divisions within the Black community made it difficult to use resources effectively. Both Black and White citizens agreed that there is still much apathy toward the political process and substantial numbers of both groups believed that programs to increase citizen involvement are important.

The 1949 study revealed that Black churches were impoverished, that only a few had trained staff other than clergy, and that three-quarters offered no programs beyond Sunday worship for the fifty percent of Blacks who were church members. In 1986, 86% of Blacks belong to a church; few are in disrepair; 40% have trained staff; and 60% offer additional services. While Black citizens are highly supportive of their churches, Black leaders are less supportive. Many of these leaders believe that the churches are not as involved in politics and community affairs as they once were and should be now, while an equal number felt that the churches have strayed from their spiritual mission and do little to combat immorality.

Social clubs, including fraternities and sororities, were important social outlets for Black citizens in 1949 and continue to be important today; their members and membership have expanded as income and education levels have improved. These organizations enjoy strong support among Black citizens (34%) but lesser approval (18%) among Black leaders.

In 1949, Black membership in civic associations were limited to Black organizations such as the NAACP. Only two community-wide organizations, the Red Cross and the Community Council, accepted Black members. Today 27% of respondents indicated that they belong to a civic group and 18% are active; figures which are relatively similar for the White community. Blacks are also more active in business and professional associations than they were thirty-seven years ago, when they were limited to all-Black groups. It is estimated that about 40% of the clubs and organizations in Greenville County have at least a few Black members, a figure which suggests continued social distance. Blacks have gained some leadership in the wider community; in a list of community leaders assembled by the Community Planning Council, 14% of the names were of Black citizens.

Conspicuously absent from Greenville's Big Idea was any criticism of segregation or any recommendation that it should be ended. While hardly surprising, this omission underscores the pervasiveness of segregation in 1949-50. In 1986, when all elements of legal segregation have ended, there is still a question about how serious a problem racism is in Greenville. Thirty-nine percent of Black citizens and 3% of Black leaders see it as a problem, while only 14% of White citizens and 3% of White leaders regard it as serious. Clearly there is a gap in perception. Given these figures it is understandable that almost three-quarters of Black citizens and sixty percent of Black leaders believe that programs to insure equal opportunity are essential.

The Black community clearly believes that progress has been made since 1949. However, only half saw improvement in the last five years and thought that the situation would improve in the next five. Interviews with Black leaders indicated much the same assessment: dramatic improvements since the 1950s, less improvement in recent years, limited prospects for the future.

B. Committee Recommendations and Comments

The Advisory Committee on community participation identified four areas of concern: political participation, religious involvement, social, professional and community involvement.

I. Political participation

A. Extend efforts by community organizations like the Urban League, Phillis Wheatly Center, and the NAACP to register as many Black citizens as possible, using the new tool of voter registration by mail for door-to-door and community registration drives.

B. Encourage Black participation in political activities and organizations.

II. Religious Involvement

Encourage dialogue between religious and civic leaders in the Black community.

III. Social, Professional and Community Involvement

A. Increase the number of Black-owned businesses; with more Black businesses, there should be more Blacks participating in social and business organizations.

B. Encourage Black participation in community, social and civic groups, some of which are almost entirely White. These groups should consider recruiting Black members.

C. Encourage leadership programs, such as the Leadership Development Program at the Phillis Wheatly Center.

Comment: The Advisory Committee believes that a great deal of progress has been made since 1949 in promoting racial equality and goodwill in the community but more progress needs to be made in the future and steps need to be taken by both Black and White communities to eliminate still existing problems.

Advisory Committee on Community Participation:

Max Heller, chairman
Larry A. Shelton, co-chairman
Ernest Adams
Robert Dennis
Rev. Q.H. Whitlock
Frank Holleman